

National Hypertension Program

Secretary Elliot Richardson of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare initiated a National Hypertension Program in July 1972. Since that time, under the leadership of Dr. Theodore Cooper, Director of the Department's National Heart and Lung Institute, the Veterans Administration, and a broad range of organizations and persons in the private sector have been working together to develop a program that will ultimately bring this major public health problem under control.

To make this happen, the public needs to be made aware of the seriousness of high blood pressure, that millions who suffer from it do not know it, and that it is easily detectable and treatable. The Health Services and Mental Health Administration, in early November 1972, accepted leadership responsibility for mounting this public education campaign, in close collaboration with the other agencies and organizations involved.

There are two target audiences—the general public and the diagnosed hypertensives. We hope to build awareness among the public of the nature and the seriousness of the problem and ultimately to motivate them to seek detection and treatments. Over 23 million Americans suffer from high blood pressure, and over half of them are not aware of it. To this audience we want to communicate five basic points:

1. High blood pressure (HBP) is a serious condition. It can lead to strokes, heart failure, serious kidney problems, and often to early death.
2. Millions of people have it—at least one in every 10 people. It can strike young and old, people of all races. Someone very important to you may have it.
3. Most of these do not know they have it. You can have HBP with no symptoms.
4. It is easy to detect. A blood pressure check is inexpensive, quick, and painless.
5. It can be controlled. You can lead a normal life.

Simple treatment can bring your blood pressure down.

Our second message for the diagnosed hypertensive will stress the dangers of "walking around with a time bomb ticking inside" but will also provide specific information on how to live under treatment for high blood pressure.

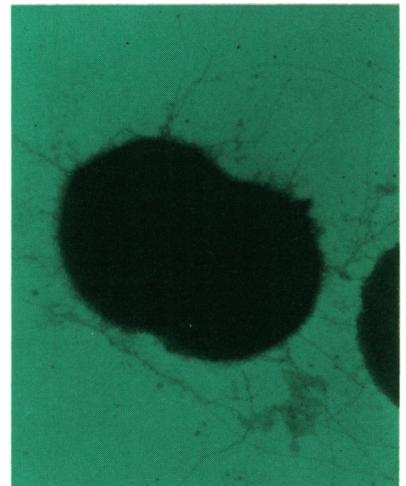
This message will contain the following elements.

1. The consequences of untreated hypertension.
2. The treatment for high blood pressure—including drugs, diet, and psychological aspects.
3. The cost and personal problems associated with a treatment regimen.
4. The risks of neglecting treatment measures.

For the general public, the program is already underway. During the next fiscal year, this awareness program will be augmented by an action message to seek detection and treatment services.

The action program is being planned for the diagnosed hypertensives. It is clearly recognized that this public education program must be sustained over a number of years if it is to have a lasting effect on premature death and disability.

Cover—*Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, type 2, negatively stained with 2 percent uranyl acetate. Because of the alarming rise in cases of gonorrhea in this country, venereal disease specialists at the Center for Disease Control have intensified their efforts to develop a serologic test for gonorrhea. A report on CDC's current research activities on gonorrhea begins on page 13.





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